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INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 000357

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [PARM](#) [PINR](#) [UNMIK](#) [YI](#) [LE](#) [IZ](#) [EG](#)  
SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE ON LEBANON, KOSOVO, IRAQ

REF: A. BEIRUT 286

[1](#)B. CAIRO 246

Classified By: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION STUART JONES  
REASONS: 1.4 (B) and (D)

[1](#)1. (C) Arab League Chief of Staff Hisham Yousef told us February 24 that Secretary General Moussa will lead an Arab League delegation to Beirut later in the day as a "last ditch effort" to secure an agreement prior to the next scheduled Lebanese parliamentary session on February 26. Yousef said that although the majority and opposition had agreed to address six major points (reftel a), he was not optimistic that a deal would be struck. He said that that one option on the table for cabinet formation is a modified "13 plus 10 plus 7" formulation, in which the majority would get 13 seats, the opposition 10, and the president 7. Under this proposal, the president would be obliged to accept one minister approved by the majority, and one approved by the minority, as part of his 7 member cabinet contingent. Yousef said that this proposal was still on the table. Note: Egyptian MFA cabinet advisor Nazih Neggary told us February 22 that in his opinion, Yousef had gone out on a limb with this proposed cabinet formulation, and that it was highly unlikely to succeed. End note.

[1](#)2. (C) On Kosovo we reminded Yousef of our position as delivered by Special Envoy Wisner (reftel b). Yousef said there are currently no plans to discuss the upcoming March 5-6 Arab League Ministerial Meeting, as no member state has requested it be on the agenda. He acknowledged that there are different views among Arab states on recognition of Kosovo.

[1](#)3. (C) Yousef confirmed that an Arab League delegation, led by Deputy Secretary General Ahmed bin Helli, will head to Baghdad on February 25. He said that the goal of the trip was to make progress on conciliation, but that this was not a preparation meeting for the Arab League conciliation conference expected to be held in April. Iraqi Permanent Representative to the Arab League Raad Alusi told us February 24 that the Arab League had postponed sending Helli twice already, and that he had to push SYG Moussa hard to finally send the delegation. Alusi was pessimistic as to whether the Arab League would in fact hold a conciliation conference in April.  
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